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A
S E R M O N

Preached before the Right Honourable the

L O R D - M A Y O R,
A L D E R M E N,
S H E R I F F S,
AND THE
LIVERIES of the several COMPANIES

OF THE
CITY of L O N D O N,

At the PARISH-CHURCH of

St. *Lawrence Jewry,*

On *Thursday*, SEPTEMBER 29, 1757,
Before the Election of a Lord-Mayor for the Year ensuing.

By *JAMES HALLIFAX*, M. A.

Vicar of EWELL in *Surry*, and Chaplain to the Right
Honourable the LORD-MAYOR.

L O N D O N :

Printed for JOHN RIVINGTON, at the *Bible and Crown* in *St. Paul's*
Church-Yard. MDCCCLVII.

Dickinson, Mayor.

An especial Court, held on the Feast of Saint Michael the Archangel, (that is to say) Thursday the 29th Day of September, 1757, and in the Thirty-first Year of the Reign of King George the Second, of Great Britain, &c.

IT is ordered, That the Thanks of this Court be given to the Reverend Mr. *Hallifax*, Chaplain to the Right Honourable the Lord-Mayor, for his Sermon preached this Day before this Court and the Liveries of the several Companies of this City, at the Parish-Church of St. *Lawrence Jewry*, before the Election of a Lord-Mayor of this City for the Year ensuing; and that he be desired to print the same.



Hodges.

2 S A M. xxiii. 3.

—*He that ruleth over Men must be just, ruling
in the Fear of God.*

THIS essential Maxim for all good Government is proposed by *David* as a standing Rule both to himself and his Successors, and well deserves the serious Attention of Persons invested with Power, not only for its inherent Excellency, but on account of the particular Time in which it was given, and the solemn Manner of introducing it; for by looking back to the Beginning of the Chapter, it appears that this was a sort of farewell Advice to Kings, not indeed from a Death-bed, yet at that Period of Life when he himself might soon expect to throw off his earthly Robe, and Diadem. And besides this, it was delivered from the Mouth of the Royal Prophet as the last immediate Dictates of the Divine Spirit, after his Psalms, and other inspired Writings for the public Use and Edification of the Church of God.

“ Now these (saith the Scripture) are the last Words of David. David, the Son of Jesse said, and the Man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet Psalmist of Israel said, the Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his

Word was in my Tongue. The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me.—He that ruleth over Men must be just, ruling in the Fear of God."

That is, it is absolutely necessary that he who giveth Laws for the Guidance of other Men's Conduct, should be just and upright in his own Life and Conversation ; and *that*, not merely for outward and civil Respects, but from an inward, and truly religious Principle, the *Fear* of that Supreme Being in whose Right, and as whose Substitute he ruleth over Mankind.

From this short opening of the Text it is evident, that *Justice* founded upon *Religion*, is the only sure Guide in the Exercise of that *Power*, which is put into the Hands of particular Persons, to preside over, and govern the rest of the World. And tho' this unerring Rule was more immediately intended by *David* for that Race of Kings which was to succeed him ; nevertheless, it is equally applicable, and obligatory to *subordinate Magistrates*, to those who move in a narrower Circle of Authority ; and therefore I shall at present chiefly confine myself to these, and endeavour to shew

I. In the *first Place*, that — *He who ruleth over Men must be just* : And

II. *Secondly*,—That this *Justice* which is to be the Guide of his Conduct, must be founded in the *Fear* of God.

Now,

Now, as *Justice* is so essential to the Character of a good *Magistrate*, it may not be improper on this Occasion to remind you that the true Nature of it, when exerted for the Benefit of others, consists in such a constant and uniform Resolution of doing Right to every Man, as can neither be wrested by the Temptations of Wealth, broken by the Force of Power, nor bent by private Affection. Neither does it consist in single Acts only (for unjust Men often do just things) but in a firm and uninterrupted Habit, in a regular and invariable Pursuit of that main End for which it was intended, namely, the rendering to all their due.

Every Virtue hath its peculiar Object : *Fortitude* is to arm itself against Perils; *Temperance* consists in Moderation of Pleasures; but then, in the Exercise of these, and such-like Virtues, a Man's own Welfare is the most intimately concerned, whereas the great Object of *Justice* is another's Good, and the chief Benefit it receives from Men, in return for a just Action, is their Commendation and Esteem. And even this, through Envy, or ill Nature, is sometimes denied; yet still it is very hard that it should loose so slender a Tribute. For if the Magistrate, out of Regard to the Public, withdraw himself from his domestic Concerns, from the Enjoyment of his Friends, and from that Satisfaction which he might find in a calm Retreat, in order to interest himself

in composing the various Contentions of his Fellow-Citizens, and to watch over them for their Peace and Security ; is it not highly just that all due Honour and Praise should be bestowed upon him, as the least Acknowledgment that can be made, for that abundant Labour and Anxiety, which must unavoidably attend the regular Discharge of so important a Trust ?

And as upright Judgment in the *Decision* of Right and *Wrong* is to be the inviolable Rule of him that beareth the *Sword* ; so, if he would not bear it in vain, he must also be upright in the *Execution* of Justice. It is not enough to *determine* justly without paying a proper Regard to that Christian *Moderation* in the Infliction of Punishment which ought always to qualify the *Rigour* of the Law. *Mercy* as well as *Justice* is an Attribute of God's Throne, and as they who sit in Judgment upon Earth, "*judge not for Men, but for the Lord,*" their impartial Sentence on the Guilty ought always to be so tempered with Clemency as not to take away the *Exercise*, but the *Severity* only of Justice.

To correct with too much Lenity is an Argument of *Indiscretion*, and endangers the Peace of the Community, by letting loose the necessary Reins of Discipline ; but, on the other hand, to have *no Feelings* of Compassion towards those who fall under the Lash of Authority, shews a great Want of that *humane Disposition*

Disposition which distinguishes our very Nature, and is one of the brightest Ornaments of earthly Power.

The greatest Comfort that can arise to any Society, is to be under the Influence of a Person eminently distinguished for *Humanity* as well as *Justice* and *Integrity*. Such a Man will never fall into any base or cruel Purposes, he has a sure Guide of his Actions, will be ever steady and impartial in all his Proceedings, will not be compelled or persuaded to mean Compliances by the Frowns, or Smiles of the Great and Powerful, will never be diverted from his Duty by the pressing Sollicitations of Friends, or the artful Insinuations of secret Enemies ; nor dare to sacrifice his Conscience, in order to gratify any private Pique, or Party-Prejudice whatsoever. He will be armed against every Temptation of this kind from a full Persuasion, that—“ *He who ruleth over Men must be just, ruling in the Fear of God.*”

II. Now by the *Fear of God*, which is the second Particular under our present Consideration, is to be understood that genuine and filial Fear, which is in the Hearts of those who are truly the Children of God, and creates in them an awful Reverence for the Divine Majesty proceeding from real Love towards him, and producing a ready Obedience to his Precepts. So that it bears much the same Sense in this Place, as in that of the Preacher, where it is

C

said,

said, that to *Fear God and keep his Commandments, is the whole Duty of Man.* That is, a just Apprehension of the Deity is a principal Foundation of all Religion; and this will appear to be so indispensably necessary both to those who *govern*, and those who *obey*, that no Society can well subsist without it. The *Magistrate*, without the Fear of God, and a due Sense of the Duties he owes to him, will want that *Courage* and *Confidence* which are proper to his Station, and will with a very ill Grace exert himself in punishing those Vices in *others*, which he is known to make no Scruple of being guilty of in his *own* Person. The very Nature of Government denotes *Goodness* as well as *Power*. Without *this*, Governors will soon lose that *Reverence* which ought to be paid to them, and consequently that *Authority* which they should exercise over the vicious and immoral. When once they *cease* to be religious, they will immediately forfeit that just Esteem and Veneration whereby they should rule over the Hearts and Affections of Men. And what is still worse, that Countenance which they give to Irreligion and Prophaneness, either by their *Connivance*, or *Example*, will soon infect the inferior Class of the People, who generally quote the Actions of their Betters in Justification of their own Offences.

For

For though Vice be in its Nature infectious, yet it becomes more fatally so, when it has the Authority of *great Personages* to encourage it. This gives it a kind of *Reputation* in the Eyes of the Multitude, from whose View the *good* Actions of Men in high Stations *ought* not, and the *bad* ones *cannot* well be concealed.

Since therefore the Manners of the lowest of the People depend so much upon those of their Superiors, a more than common Care is required from Persons of Rank and Power, not to give the least Encouragement to loose Principles, or wicked Practices; but, on the contrary, to add Lustre to Virtue, by making Use of their Greatness as an Instrument of promoting it, and by a sincere Endeavour to let their Light so shine before Men as to appear in the *Beauty of Holiness*, as well as in the *Splendor of Authority*.

The Magistrate who makes *Religion* and *Power* thus to walk hand in hand, may truly be said to be *just*, and to *rule over Men in the Fear of God*. A Consciousness of having so faithfully acquitted himself of the great Trust reposed in him, will always afford the most solid Satisfaction to his own Breast, and he may rest assured, that the People will rejoice at his being in Authority, and bestow upon him every Acknowledgement that can be due to

him, for such eminent Services to his Fellow-Citizens, and to his Country.

Especially if to these indispensable Duties of his high Office there be added a condescending Deportment, an affable Behaviour, an Easiness of Access, and a chearful Compliance with all reasonable Requests. These amiable Graces, and Ornaments of true Greatness (though perhaps not looked upon by some as essential) are of singular Service to a good and useful Magistrate. For since a favourable Opinion from others is a principal Instrument of doing good, and since the Vulgar especially, who are apt to confine their Views to external Appearances, do chiefly observe the Magistrate's Behaviour towards them, and from thence generally form their Judgment of him; he that ruleth with Prudence will think it well worth his while to recommend himself to their Esteem by a decent and winning Deportment. But let it not be supposed that he is to court their Approbation by mean and servile Submissions (for this would be prostituting his high Character) but still he may, without the least Impeachment of his Dignity, shew himself easy of Approach upon all Occasions, not churlish, or imperious to those about him; always ready to hear any just Complaints, and earnest to redress every Grievance which falls under his Cognizance.

He that regards his Office in a *true* Light, will confider that he is raifed to this exalted Station but for a *Season*, and muft afterwards ftep down again to his former private Condition. This Reflection will have a double Ufe. For firft of all, it will make him more willing to lay afide his Attention to his own private Concerns, and devote that fhort Portion of Time to the Service of the *Public*; and next to this, it will prove a great Check to refrain him, either from fuch a *lofty* and *affuming* Conduct, or fuch *mean* and *unbecoming* Condefcenfions, as might afterwards render him odious and contemptible. He will make it his main Point in Behaviour fo to demean himfelf whilft *in Power*, as juftly to merit the Esteem of the People when he has laid down his *Enfigns of Honour*, and has nothing to attract their Admiration and Refpect, but his paft Services to his Fellow-Citizens, and that inherent Virtue, which in every Station of Life, whether *public* or *private*, will be “*an Ornament of Grace unto his Head, and Chains about his Neck.*”

Having thus far endeavoured from this Paſſage of the Text, and in Compliance with my Duty on this Day's Solemnity, to point out the *effential*, as well as the *ornamental* Qualifications of a worthy Magiſtrate; or, to ſpeak with more Propriety, having attempted to deſcribe this high Character in *Words*

from a *Model* now before us ; I shall, by way of Conclusion to this Discourse, shew, as briefly as possible, what great Reason the People have to express their Joy, and what Returns of Gratitude are justly due for the many Benefits attending the Administration of such a Magistrate.

And these are Particulars which require very little Proof : For since human Nature is necessarily pleased with receiving Offices of Kindness, and Beneficence ; since Men cannot but be delighted with the Enjoyment of those Blessings which render their Conditions easy and happy ; they must needs rejoice at being under the Authority of a Person, whose earnest Care and constant Endeavour is to procure *these Advantages* for them ; whose unwearied Labour and Study is to preserve that Peace and good Order, without which, not only Men's *Persons*, but their *religious* and *civil* Rights also would continually be in Danger.

We are all of us too apt to overlook these common, yet important Benefits of good Government, which, like deep Streams, gently and silently flow in upon us ; and were there, as I trust, there is not, any Occasion for it, it would surely be no hard Matter to awaken us to a proper Sense of our present Happiness, by considering, either the
Miseries

Miseries attendant on a wicked Magistrate's Administration; or, which is still worse, the dreadful Consequences of no Government at all. If, when the *Righteous are in Authority*, it is impossible to prevent every Disorder in a City; if their utmost Vigilance and Care cannot altogether restrain the Hand of the *Murderer*; stop the Fury of the *Blasphemer* and *Oppressor*; lay open, and punish the artful Frauds of every wicked *Man who lieth in wait to deceive*; how numberless must the Calamities of that City be which is without all Awe of Justice, and at full Liberty to satisfy every unruly Appetite!

This single Consideration is enough to convince us what Reason we have to rejoice under the manifold Blessings of a good and watchful Magistrate, and will of course prompt us to a suitable Return for these Advantages.

We shall learn from hence to demean ourselves towards him with that becoming Submission which his high Station calls for from us. By observing *his* Assiduity and Concern for the public Good, *those under* him will be taught to do every thing in their several *Relations* and *Capacities* that may forward his laudable Designs; they will not run into unreasonable Heats and Divisions, but steadily pursue that excellent Plan of Government which hath been wisely drawn out for the Regulation of

this wealthy and populous City, without *Favour*, or *Prejudice*, without *Respect to the Persons of Men*, or the particular Interests they may be subservient to.

Again, *that Affability*, and *Candour* which render him easy of Access, and ready to redress the Injuries of others, should make every one cautious not to give him any *unnecessary* Disquiet, nor molest him with *groundless* Complaints ; but, on the other hand, to alleviate, as much as possible, the Burden of his Office by all becoming Encouragement, to induce him to employ his Time and Thoughts in promoting our Welfare, and advancing our Happiness.

Last of all, if it evidently appear from the general Conduct of the Magistrate, that *Justice* founded upon a reverential *Fear* of God, is the invariable Rule of his Actions ; if it be his earnest Endeavour to discourage and suppress Vice, and resolutely maintain true Religion and Virtue ; *his Example* should prevail upon *others* to tread in the same Steps, and to do the utmost they are capable of in their several Stations towards the Advancement of so glorious a Design.

In a Word, may we never want good and righteous Magistrates to protect and rule over us ;
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and may we always study to merit their Protection. May this great and flourishing City be as rich in Virtue and good Works, as it is in worldly Treasures. May its Inhabitants, from the highest to the lowest, heartily endeavour to regulate their Behaviour by the unerring Precepts of Christianity, from a full Assurance, that true Dignity is not that which consists in outward Splendor, or is measured by glaring Popularity, but that *Religion* is the *real* Excellency of Man, and *Virtue* his most *honourable* Attainment.

F I N I S.

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LORD MAYOR

and may we always find in this
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